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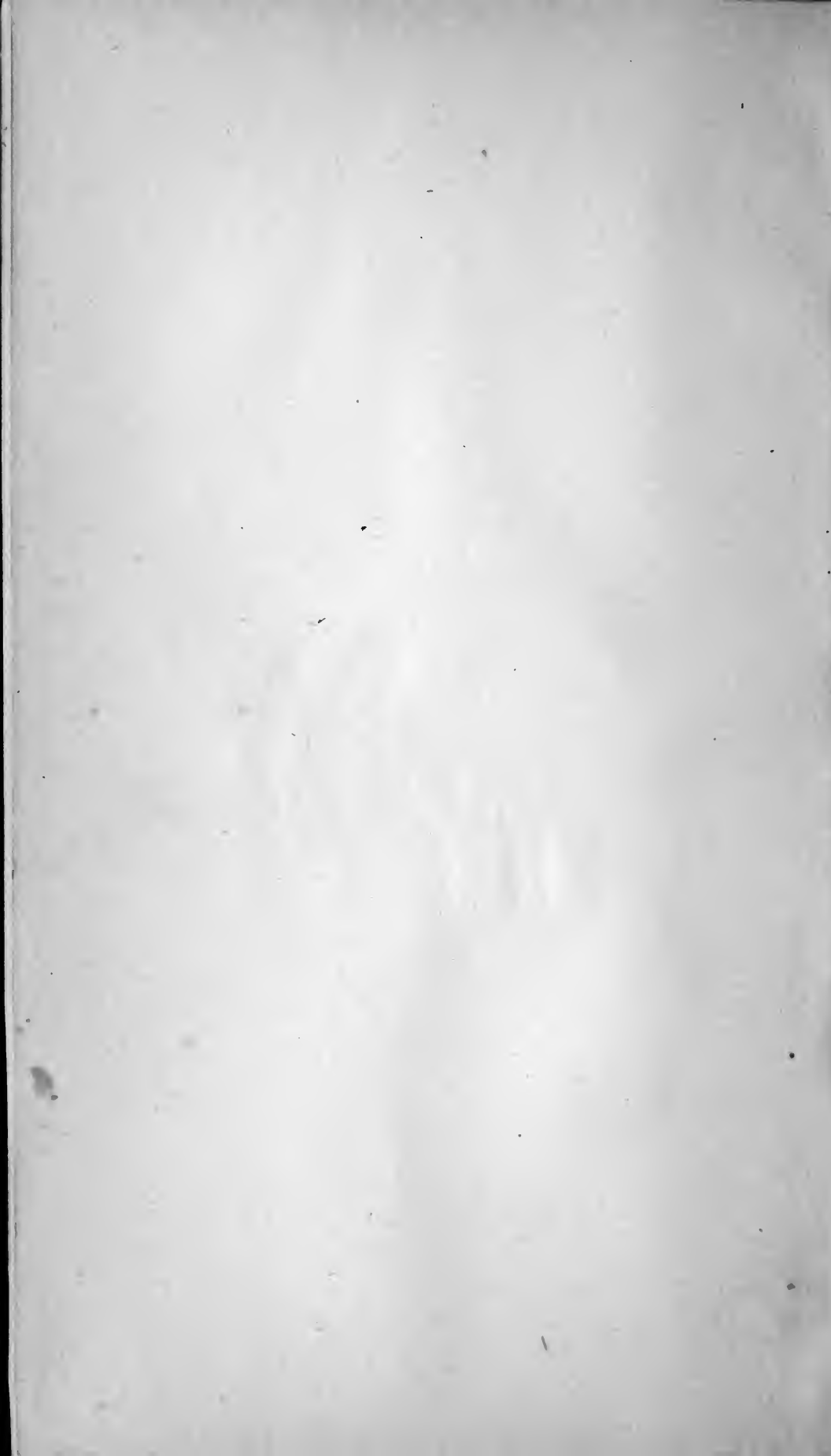
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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.









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A

# PROTEST



IN THE

SPIRIT

OF

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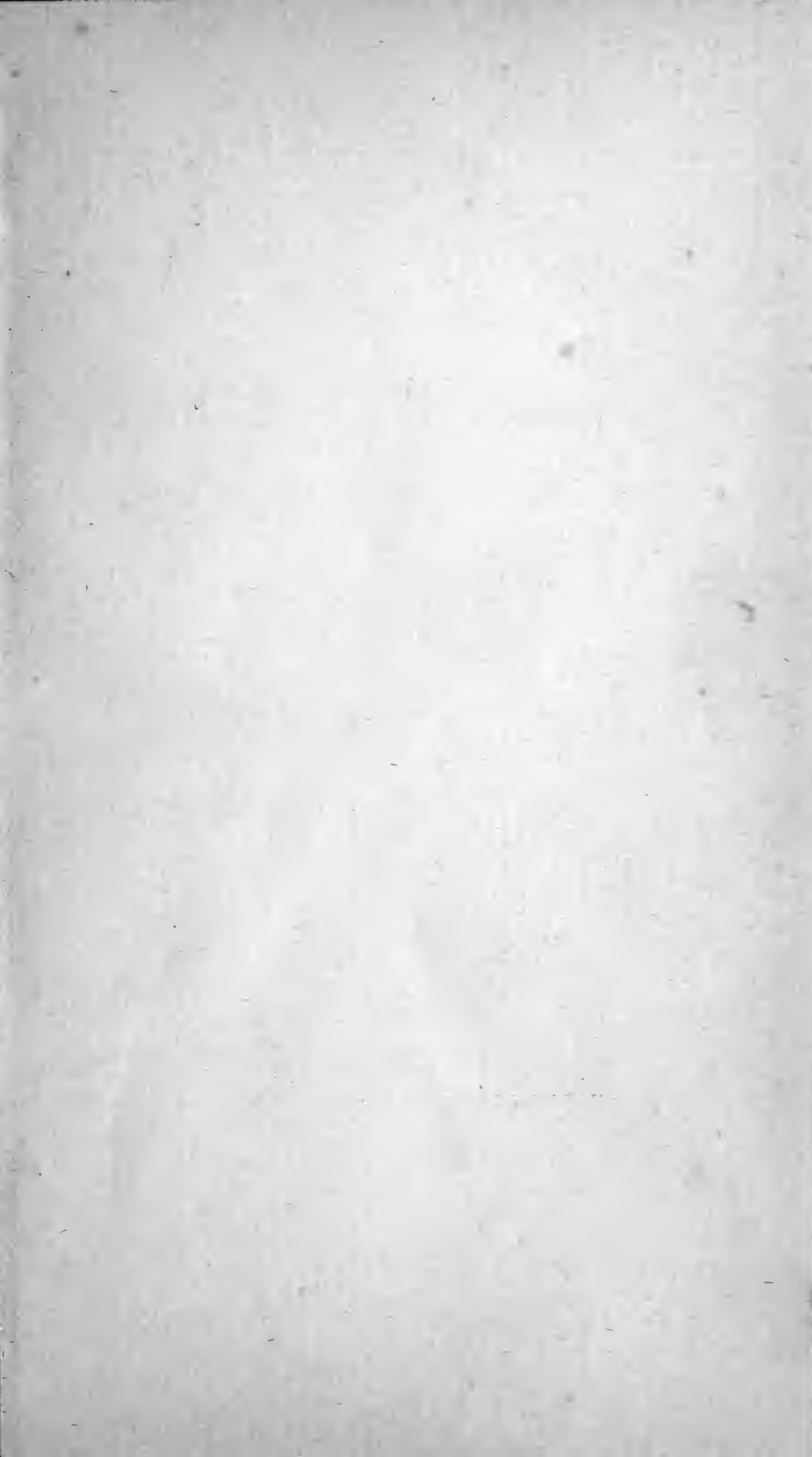
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# NATURE

## THE

# AGNOSTIC'S MAGAZINE

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FIRST ISSUE.

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### CONTENTS:

**A PROTEST.** By Mich. De Gavarelle.

**CONSTITUTION** of the Society for  
Propagating Natural Truth. (P. V. N.)

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PUBLISHED BY ORDER OF THE  
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7 Pearl Street, near Battery Park.

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When of the tree, that Nature made,  
The Cross was cut,—the make of man—  
To quit all life, the tree he bade.  
From death relieve the tree, who can?  
It is eternal Nature's action,  
From which may come its resurrection.

# A PROTEST

DIRECTED TO

James Cardinal Gibbons

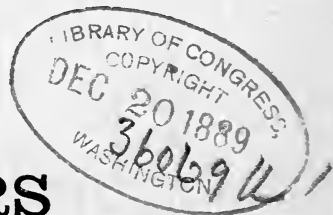
ARCHBISHOP OF BALTIMORE,

AS THE HEAD OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC HIERARCHY

IN THE UNITED STATES OF NORTH AMERICA.

AND AS THE AUTHOR OF THE RECENTLY PUBLISHED BOOK

"OUR CHRISTIAN HERITAGE"



---

## SEVEN LETTERS

written in the spirit of

ROBERT ELSMERE.

✓  
BY

MICH. DE GAVARELLE, P. V. N.

---

PUBLISHED BY ORDER OF THE  
SOCIETY FOR PROPAGATING NATURAL TRUTH.

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**DEDICATED**

to all those  
who consider their intellect  
as their best possession  
and

Freedom of Conscience

as conditional to their

**ENJOYMENT OF LIFE,**

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## PREFACE

The army of Agnostics is crossing the Rubicon towards Rome.  
They are organizing for practical purposes. Who will stand by  
the flag? And who not? The Leader.

*ITALICS indicate quotations from "Our Christian Heritage" by Cardinal-Archbishop Gibbons, unless specific statement to the contrary be made.*

ROMAN (LONG PRIMER) indicates the address of the First Congress of Roman Catholic Laymen in the United States of North America.

ROMAN (LONG PRIMER LEADED) indicates quotation from a popular book on the human body in sickness (Pathology) not as yet published.

ROMAN (SMALL PICA LEADED) indicates the author's own expressions.

## FIRST LETTER.

TO WHOM CARDINAL GIBBONS DIRECTED HIS  
BOOK, "OUR CHRISTIAN HERITAGE,"

AND TO WHOM NOT.

*Your Eminence*

Has directed to the North American public in celebration of the one hundredth anniversary of the *creation* of the North American Roman Catholic Hierarchy an Address for the evident purpose of gathering to the fold of the Roman Catholic Church a part of the North American people, which your Eminence described as follows :

*"The great majority of readers in this bustling age, professing to have no leisure, and certainly evincing no inclination to peruse bulky volumes, no matter how superior their merit may be."*

The predecessors of your Eminence in the Hierarchy of the Roman Catholic Church have shown great assiduity at all times since the foundation of the Roman Church, and wherever the members of its Hierarchy had not succeeded in combining in themselves the much coveted temporal power or political sovereignty with the spiritual power claimed

by them,—in persuading the political rulers of the exclusive rights, which the Roman Catholic Church claimed to hold on humanity in general and on the sovereigns in special. As long and wherever absolutism held the political power, the Roman Catholic Church used such power as an instrument for its purposes, and the church did use controversy and persuasion only as a palliation to the use of power, or when the power of absolutism failed to uphold the rule of the church.

Your Eminence is following the practice, as it is hereabove truly stated, in addressing the sovereign people, the ruler of the United States of America, the people itself, thus yielding to political necessity in this case, as the Roman Catholic Church has always made it a practice to do, celebrating high mass and chanting “Te Deum laudamus” with the same fervor to Louis XVI., to the Republic, to Napoleon I., to Charles X., to Louis Philip, Napoleon III., to President Thiers and to his successors.

Every citizen, whom your Eminence will thus gather to the folds of the Roman Catholic Church, will represent an increase of power for the church itself and for its Hierarchy in the United States. And be it admitted, that, if the expansion of the Roman Catholic Church in the United States will continue at the same

rate, as it has during the past century, the majority of the sovereign people of the United States of North America will be found, wielding its political power under Roman rule, disfranchising the minority in the same way and manner, as the Jews were disfranchised during all of the so-called Christian aera, as the Moors and Indians were disfranchised under Spanish rule, as the Protestants were disfranchised, until with sword in hand they obtained their liberty of conscience, or until they fled from the home of their ancestors to the then inhospitable shores of this continent.

The sovereign people on this continent in resisting aggression on the part of the Roman Catholic Church and Hierarchy is not as favorably situated, as other sovereigns were or are in their defence against such aggression. The Catholic dukes and kings of Catholic Bavaria have claimed and do now claim the hereditary prerogative of granting or withholding their *placet* within their realm not only as to the personality of the Hierarchy but also on the public teaching or non-teaching of newly created dogmas of the church; and at the present moment the present king of Bavaria refuses, supported therein by the highest officials of his kingdom, to abandon his prerogative to refuse his *placet* to the

official promulgation within his kingdom of the newly created dogma of the infallibility of the Roman Pontifex when speaking ex cathedra.

Thus the political power being represented by a hereditary individuality possesses a representative voice, by which a protest may be expressed against the assumption of undue influences on civil, temporal, political matters by the Roman church, but the North American people possesses no such authorized representative voice, and on the very day, that your Eminence's desire will be fulfilled in this *bustling age*, and all those *who profess to have no leisure for study*, will have entered the folds of the church, the church's political power will be supreme and the Roman Pontifex may ex cathedra hurl an anathema, as he has done so often heretofore, against the liberty of human conscience to believe or not to believe, to search for facts and truth and not to submit to the authority of orthodox teachings. And such freedom of conscience will practically exist no longer on this continent, and the civil authority of the United States will be the executioner of the dictates from Rome, the same as Francon and Spanish sovereigns have been.

From the standpoint of your Eminence this

would be a boon to the American people, but from the standpoint of the reverently undersigned its prevention would be worth the repetition of all the sorrow and suffering of the martyrs of science and of liberty of conscience, whom the Roman Church has persecuted, and be worth all the blood, which the martyrs for christianity have shed in resisting to the atrocious demands of tyranny then covered with the robe of paganism, as your Eminence now wears the robe colored after the blood of these martyrs of their own liberty of conscience.

And this conviction of a high value of the liberty of conscience, doubt and research is shared in by many, and in special by the *Protestant denominations still retaining faith in at least the divine mission of Jesus Christ*, notwithstanding your Eminence's eminently prudent *captatio benevolentiae* in calling to your Eminence's side, while the battle lasts, *able and zealous advocates in Protestant writers, in not despising or rejecting their support—in gladly holding out to them the right hand of fellowship*, SO LONG AS THEY SIDE WITH YOUR EMINENCE IN STRIKING THE COMMON FOE, declaring it as PLEASANT TO BE ABLE TO STAND SOMETIMES ON THE SAME PLATFORM WITH THE CHURCH'S OLD ANTAGONISTS.

The battle once won, the Roman Church's ingratitude must by necessity become the admiration of contemporaneous humanity, and the "so long as" the present outlay for formal fair play will then be to the Roman Church the fullest justification in the judgment of the thus entangled humanity.

### **The Common Foe.**

*"The great majority of readers in this bustling age profess to have no leisure, and certainly evince no inclination to peruse bulky volumes, no matter how superior their merit may be."*

*It is chiefly to this busy restless class that the writer addresses himself and he craves their earnest attention.—(p. V.).*

Thus your Eminence specifically stated, to whom your address on *our christian heritage* is directed, and when your Eminence speaks of the *common foe*, it should in correct conclusion be understood that *this busy restless class*, this large majority of the American people, be indeed the *common foe*, whom your Eminence proposes to battle with. And this conclusion claims so much more strength of logic, as immediately after speaking of the *common foe*, your Eminence declares (p. 2)

*Nor were these pages written in the fond*



*hope of influencing PROFESSIONAL free thinkers, agnostics and other avowed enemies of Christianity, who will not learn, lest their knowledge might compel them to do well, who trade in blasphemy, who glory in their infidelity, and who earn for themselves a cheap reputation by coarsely caricaturing every doctrine and tradition, that Christians hold dear. Every scoffer at religion is the Thersites of the Christian camp. Such characters are found in every age; and they were aptly described over eighteen centuries ago by the Apostle as “ungodly men denying the only Sovereign Ruler, and our Lord Jesus Christ, blaspheming whatever things they know not; and what things soever they naturally know, like dumb beasts, in these they are corrupted; feasting together without fear, clouds without water, which are carried about by the winds, autumnal leaves without fruit, raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own confusion, wandering stars, to whom the storm of darkness is reserved forever.”*

*These men profess to have discovered in the revealed Scriptures, contradictions and absurdities and legislative enactments unworthy of the wisdom and justice of the Divine Lawgiver. They judge everything from their own narrow standpoint without regard*

*to the circumstances of time and place in which the Scriptures were written. They will offer more objections to Christianity in an hour than could be reasonably answered in a month. While avowing their ignorance of many of the physical laws, that govern the universe and that regulate even their own bodies, which they see and feel, they will insist on knowing everything regarding the incomprehensible Deity and his attributes. In a word, they will admit mysteries in the material world that surrounds them; but mysteries in the supernatural world, they will not accept. They will deny any revealed truth, that does not fall within the range of human experience and that is not in accordance with the discovered laws of nature. But to reject a dogma on such grounds cannot be approved by philosophy or sound sense.*

But the undersigned assuming it to be impossible, that your Eminence really intended to call the majority of the American people, *the common foe* of the Roman Catholic and Protestant clergy, but unable to find any other foe explained or described in your Eminence's book, may also assume, that in your Eminence's mind the foe takes shape in the busy, restless class, the same being considered as largely influenced and controled by PRO-

FESSIONAL *free-thinkers and agnostics*, and that your Eminence intends not to deal with the leaders, but to direct your Eminence's attention exclusively to the masses following them.

And in this assumption the writer is upheld by the following statement (on page 4) in your Eminence's address.

*This little volume is affectionately addressed to a large, and I fear, an increasing class of persons, who through association, the absence of Christian training, a distorted education and pernicious reading have not only become estranged from the specific teachings of the Gospel, but whose moral and religious nature has received such a shock, that they have only a vague and undefined faith even in the truths of natural religion underlying Christianity.*

*These deserve more pity than blame, they have never shared in the Christian heritage of their fathers, or they were robbed of it, before they had the moral and intellectual vigor to resist the invader, or they quietly surrendered their inheritance before they could appreciate its inestimable value. They do not boast of their spiritual darkness and moral obliquity. They make no parade of their irreligion. They feel unhappy in their deprivation.*

*Some of them not questioning our sin-*

*cerity, nor quite denying the objective truth of our Christian profession, contemplate us with secret envy. But as they fancy, that the atmosphere of faith would be oppressive to them; because it involves sacrifices hard to flesh and blood, they make no efforts to acquire it. Their disease is partly mental doubt but still more moral cowardice.*

*Others of them honestly imagine that, in accepting and professing the truths of Christianity, we are in a state of happy delusion, and they pity us.*

*There are others, I think, who as honestly persuade themselves, that we do not believe what we preach; and they very naturally despise us.*

*The men, of whom I speak, have but a dim and hazy view of the first principles of religion.*

*To lead them back to the Christian fold by starting with an appeal to the divine claims of Christ, to the value of the soul, the voice of conscience, the importance of salvation, the glory of heaven or the sufferings of the reprobate, is to assume as granted facts, which they do not accept. It is like commencing the house at the roof instead of at the foundation. As grace is founded on nature, so the knowledge of supernatural religion must rest on natural religion. We waste our time in trying to build up the edifice of faith in men*

*in whose souls the foundations of natural truth have been undermined.*

*What is to be gained in exhorting men to worship the Trinity, until the misgivings they have about the existence of a personal God are removed?*

*What will it profit us to admonish them to submit to the inscrutable decrees of Providence, if they do not admit a superintending Providence, but look upon all events, that happen, as the result of physical laws or of blind chance?*

*There is little to be gained in quoting Scripture to men who imagine, that many facts of Scripture are controverted by the deductions of science.*

*In vain do we strive to persuade men to be solicitous about the salvation of their souls, so long as they are seduced into the belief, that they have no soul or spiritual being, and maintain, that their mental conceptions are mere modifications of the brain.*

*Before we can persuade them to listen with docility to the voice of conscience, we must first convince them, that conscience is the voice of God, and not, as they imagine, the prompting of a timid nature, or the outcome of education.*

*Before we can succeed in urging men to keep the Commandments, the distinction between virtue and vice, which is well-nigh ob-*

literated from their hearts, must be made clearly manifest.

And we are preaching to deaf ears in rebuking sin and in exhorting men to resist their evil inclinations, till we get them to admit, that man enjoys moral freedom, and disabuse them of the false notion, that sensual desires were given us to be gratified, and that it is neither expedient nor possible to resist what a contemporary writer calls "*the divine rights of passion.*"<sup>1</sup>

In a word, it is time thrown away to expatiate on the happiness of eternal life before hearers, who do not believe in immortality, but who regard death as the term of man's existence.

The class of men of whom I am writing, will bluntly say to us: We are longing for light, but we hesitate to become Christians, not so much because your religion claims to be supernatural, as because we SUSPECT it to be irrational. We reject your authority as teachers; we reject Christian revelation; we take nothing for granted; we appeal to the court of reason and historical evidence. Let us try to meet them on their own ground, and accept the appeal.

Your Eminenc 's hereabove quoted description of the masses standing outside of all

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<sup>1</sup>Robert Elsmere.

orthodox christian creeds could not well be expected to be other than just such as it is, namely: one written under the assumption, that all, what is inside of the Roman Catholic Church, be good, and all, what be outside of it, be bad.

If in such a description the words Buddhism be substituted for Christianity, and Buddhist, for Christian, and some allusions to specific christian dogmas by allusions to Buddhist dogmas, it would read just as well in defense of *Buddhism* as it does of *Christianity*. Nevertheless many of its assertions have the value only of assumptions in both cases. It is indeed one of the tenacious illusions with the adherents to orthodox creeds, that all those standing outside do not feel happy. This is indeed not so. Under equal dispositions and surroundings agnostics are much more at ease (happy) in their true inward mind than all those as yet waging battle with their doubts in their own mind, and these battles will occur in the most stubborn of christian believers, as the confessions of many indicate.

Leaving out the controversy with heretics (Protestants, etc.) for the present (until later on, in case any convert to christianity might incline that way) your Eminence creates appearance of meeting those, who *bluntly say*:

*We are longing for light, but we hesitate to become Christians, not so much because*



*your religion claims to be supernatural, as because we SUSPECT it to be irrational. We reject your authority as teachers; we reject Christian revelation; we take nothing for granted; we appeal to the court of reason and historical evidence.*

And your Eminence makes the proposal:

*Let us try to meet them on their own ground, and accept the appeal.*

But your Eminence is bound by many vows under oath to not meet them on their own ground, because, whenever you enter the contest, you are under solemn promise, vow and oath to never become convinced of any theorem peculiarly theirs, or of any fact disproving your creed, and to reject all what be in conflict with the Roman Catholic creed. And should I or any other agnostic convince your intellect of any such theorem or fact, your Eminence would go down on your Eminence's knees and exhort the Unknown to turn your mind and to deliver you of the wickedness of considering your intellect superior to the grace of believing in one creed only, namely in that of the Roman Catholic Church.

Though your Eminence enters the arena with the assertion of meeting agnostics on their own ground, your Eminence in reality cannot and will not do this, but will assume to be unconvinced at all times and that even to be convinced would be falling into error.



Your Eminence does in one place not recognize professional (learned in their convictions) agnostics as those to be addressed and in the other (as above quoted) they are represented as those, whom your Eminence proposes to meet on their own ground. As shown the former assertion is true and the latter assertion is false in more than one sense.

Thus your Eminence has directed the address to the intellectually untrained or insufficiently equipped, and thus your Eminence has prepared thoroughly for pushing aside and ignoring any controversing expression, which might emanate from a PROFESSIONAL *free thinker or agnostic*.

I have most carefully examined the description, as your Eminence makes it of PROFESSIONAL *free thinkers, agnostics, and other avowed enemies of christianity*, whom your Eminence excludes from all consideration. But finding, that none of the essential qualifications made by your Eminence could possibly be applied to myself, and although not claiming to belong to the ignorant classes, as your Eminence describes them, I sustain a slight hope, that your Eminence's dignity may permit these present open letters to be read and to be considered aside of your Eminence's address. To prohibit, to ignore them, to answer to

them with incriminations of the author's intentions, the author's faculties, the author's learning, the author's character or the author's life, would in no wise settle the questions at issue, but would be in pursuance only of the practice of the Roman Church and of the method already followed by it so often of changing the issue from a question of fact and truth to one of personal incrimination.

Before stating why I do not belong to the class described by your Eminence as *the professional free thinkers, agnostics and other avowed enemies of christianity*, for whom your Eminence's pages were not written, permit me to make the solemn declaration, that I do neither claim to be one only of a kind in existence, but that it is in my sure knowledge as the result of personal observation and intercourse on two continents for the forty years last past that the description, as your Eminence gives it of enemies of Christianity, as quoted above, may find its objects amongst the ignorant masses, born and raised, where the Roman Catholic Church held them in its bondage, and where the endeavor to throw off its bondage is steeped in hatred against the suppression of liberty of conscience.

But amongst those nations, who bestow a liberal education on their rising generations,

and who are not sufferers from church compulsion, inimity to christianity is not a necessary complement to the search for truth, to free thinking and to the confession not to know (agnostics) many things, which your Eminence claims to know. And after stating, that I am one only amongst many hundred thousands, I may add, that I am only one amongst them standing low in ability and learning and virtue when compared with their larger number. I now may be permitted to show, that your Eminence's description neither describes them nor me, and that therefore I may raise my voice in defence of humanity against Roman encroachment on liberty of conscience.

If amongst free thinkers there be a few, who make free thought their *profession, who will not learn, lest their knowledge might compel them to do well, who trade in blasphemy*, (though your Eminence would call *blasphemy* every discussion regarding the Supreme Being not entered upon for the absolute and exclusive purpose of proving its existence) *who glory in their infidelity and who earn for themselves a cheap reputation by coarsely caricaturing every doctrine and tradition, that Christians hold dear*—is this a characteristic description of them as a class? Your Eminence's words are

of a kind with the often repeated but eternally false assertion that enthusiasm for truth be begotten in vice. If your Eminence's description might be called correct and then certainly in part only, and some of the public lecturers on free thought be made to stand as examples of the total class of free thinkers, then there is the same distinction between them and all the other free thinkers as it is between the Roman Catholic clergy and the Roman Catholic people.

With both, the lecturing free thinker and the Roman clergyman, their lecturing is a matter of finance, and both are apt to overdo their task and to betray in their behavior and words so much of vulgarity as be inherent to their individual nature. Would your Eminence consider the Roman Catholic clergy as a class, to be reprehensible on account of the black sheep amongst them?

When I began writing the present letters, I sincerely hoped (on account of the importance of the subject matter treated, on account of the class of men, whom I hope to reach with these letters, and lastly but not leastly on account of your Eminence's dignified position and of my own nature) to not be carried by the qualities of your Eminence's utterances into what might appear as a neglect of

courtesy, even when stating facts to the fullness of their value. But would it not be a frustration of my purpose, were I to omit to state the fact, in case your Eminence made a statement, of which it is self-evident, that your Eminence must have known the inaccuracy and even the want of veracity?

Can it be otherwise than known to your Eminence, that there are living at the present age on this and other continents, a distinct class of scientists, the intellectual labors of whom draw their entire vitality from their enthusiasm for knowledge and truth, and the life of whom is in no wise inferior as *to doing well* to that of the plurality of the Catholic clergy, and the knowledge of whom, though it may have conducted them to agnosticism, does so much more compel them *to do well*, as such compulsion does not come from exterior authority, but from their own convictions, and so much more so, as it is part of their conviction, that no cause will remain without an effect, and in consequence, that they cannot efface some of the effects of their own acts, by simply regretting, proposing to do better in the future, and by confessing to one of the priests of the Roman Church. Can it be otherwise than known to your Eminence, that these men are no enemies of christianity, but that

they have and confess admiration for what is true and noble in christianity and for what christian teaching and christian charity and influences have accomplished and do accomplish in educating humanity and in compassing its passions?

Is it possible, that your Eminence should ignore, that creed and religion are two absolutely different things, that doubting, investigating, research for truth may well go together with religion, and that they in no wise involve *scoffing at religion*.

Can it be otherwise than be known to your Eminence, that the cosmopolitan republic of scientists and enthusiasts for truth and knowledge does not as a class *trade in blasphemy, does not coarsely caricature every doctrine and tradition, that Christians hold dear*. (Huxley, Tyndall, and a hundred thousand others.)

Can it be otherwise than be known to your Eminence, that men, such as you truly state, that they were found in every age, by the very earnestness of their nature, by the very enthusiasm of their convictions, though they may glory in their own consciousness over their emancipation from intellectual bondage, must by the very nature of their tendencies tender the charity of tolerance to those

living under orthodox authority, that they can not glory in what your Eminence calls infidelity on their part, but what in reality should be called on the part of orthodox believers the intellectual bondage, in which the majority of humanity is held as yet. And must it not be known of necessity to your Eminence, that rational criticism of the Scriptures is not one of the essential distinctions as between the Roman Catholic church and orthodox Protestantism on the one side and Agnosticism on the other.

And is it otherwise possible, than that your Eminence should know, that it be not true what your Eminence states, namely that they (the agnostics) *will insist on knowing everything regarding the incomprehensible Deity and His attributes.*

Your Eminence does know, that it is the very characteristic confession, on which agnosticism rests, of knowing nothing about an incomprehensible Deity and His attributes, while the Roman church teaches on the church's own authority to every man, woman and child willing to listen all about the incomprehensible Deity and His attributes.

If your Eminence claims, that, because agnostics admit mysteries in the material world, they must accept as true mysteries in the

supernatural world, and that their rejecting of dogmas of the Roman church cannot be approved by philosophy or sound sense, then this is, as far as *philosophy* is concerned, not quite correct, because, if your Eminence's philosophy does not, theirs does, and as far as *sound sense* be concerned, agnostics evidently rely in all their conclusions on repeatable, testable observations made by sound human senses, bawaring with utmost assiduity against illusions and hallucinations, of both of which they believe a considerable admixture to be contained in what the Roman Catholic Church considers as revelations.

Those only ignorant of the facts, as they exist, can be impressed by your Eminence's statements, such as hereabove printed. With the educated part of humanity they can to the best create a suspicion only against teachings and practices, the pre-eminent representative of which must recur to *such* means of misrepresentation in order to hold his own.

That your Eminence has specifically declared (page 4, etc.) to have written for those who unaware of causes or reasons have left or are withheld from the fold of the church is indeed no justification for misrepresentations as to the character and qualities of their assumed leaders, who with full consciousness and by



their own free intellectual selection stand outside of the realm of the Roman Church and of orthodoxism in general.

## SECOND LETTER.

### WHAT MAY BE KNOWN AND PROVEN AND WHAT NOT.

*Your Eminence*

Has collected with great learnedness all such evidence, as will make the existence of a self conscious eternal Supreme Being and Creator of the Universe appear as highly probable, and far be it from the undersigned to deny such existence. But your Eminence thereby produces the impression, as if your Eminence considered facts and quotations as stated as sufficient rational proofs of such existence, thus claiming a faculty, which your Eminence, a human being, does not possess, namely, the faculty of rendering proof, using natural faculties therefore, for a supernatural theorem.

I specifically protest against being misinterpreted to the effect, as if I undertook to deny what your Eminence claims to have proven. Were I to deny what to prove or to disprove is beyond human faculty, I should commit the same error or produce the same erroneous impression, as your Eminence's book does, namely of proving what is unprovable. The following exposition will more specifically define the position thus taken, and it should be here stated, that in such exposition there are

quoted long passages from the English edition of a medical book (singled out by different type), written for the people at large, by one of the greatest anatomists and physiologists of the present century, and edited after his death by other men not less devoted to natural truth than the original author.

If it be within human faculty to observe by the use of human senses, to ascertain facts by methodically repeating and testing observations and to thus establish elementary facts, and to therefrom form logical conclusions and to subject these conclusions and results to critical test and to systematize a series of facts into a science, if all this be within human faculties, than we may accept the following facts as having been established.

1. Man is a part of nature and is subject in special to all the laws, which govern nature in general.

2. Therefore what is true for all natural things at large is true for man also in special.

3. There is in nature no effect, but where there be a natural cause conditional to such effect.

4. All effects in nature are the results of causes consisting in a change in their mutual relations or in relation to space at large of substances either ponderable or imponderable, although what appears as yet as such a distinct substance may be a modified quality of the same substance, and the cause then be a mutual modification of specific states of the same substance.

5. Human thought is an effect of a natural cause, as all other effects in nature are.

All what is perceptible by human senses is subject to methodical critical observation under the same given conditions and is *part of nature*, and is thus subject to being ascertained by human investigation. And what is not perceptible to human senses and is not subject to methodical critical observation under repeated given conditions and what therefore is not part of nature is called *supernatural*.

In consequence the dividing line, between natural and supernatural theorems, is a well defined one. NATURAL THEOREMS can be proven to the satisfaction of a large overwhelming majority of those having stored within them what mainly constitutes human knowledge concerning the subject matter under consideration, such proofs resulting from the observation by our senses of natural facts and from methodical conclusion based thereon. And such proof can be repeated with the obtainable conditions therefor methodically prepared.

SUPERNATURAL THEOREMS can not be proven by actual repeatable observation, but they must be accepted if at all, on the basis of historical events, claimed to be true and to be correctly represented, and on the authority of records concerning such events as prepared by men not as yet gifted with the modern capability of methodical observation and investigation and inclined with the balance of humanity of their time, to attribute to the super-

natural all, they as yet did not understand to be part and parcel of the activity of observable natural things and forces.

A difference further lies in the fact, that the knowledge of natural facts does not claim anything but what can be ascertained to the satisfaction of human observation, while it is claimed in favor of the supernatural, that concerning it we have, as an act of voluntary submission of our intellect, to accept what the intellect cannot understand, and that the capability of such submission be a gift (grace with catholics, etc.,) from divinity, which divinity is accepted to be in nature and to fill space and to possess the faculty to become at times observable to our senses or of which as the thought (logical expression of thought) the universe is the body.

It is thus clear, that the difference between natural and supernatural theorems consists mainly in the possibility on the one hand of ascertaining *facts* with regard to natural subject matter, while with regard to supernatural theorems on the other hand we possess no such possibility but the liberty for assuming only.

“One of the main supernatural questions we all feel highly interested in, is that, as to whether on the total cessation of organic activity in our body and while that body is re-dissolving into the chemical elements and compounds, of which its organic structure was built up, and when the totality called our individuality and personality is either totally falling

apart or if kept together by artificial means, no longer partakes as such in the movement and changes of substances as pertaining to the life of the body, whether then permanently or temporarily, separate from said dead body or from the natural elements which constitute it, another different or separate individuality, not being subject to methodical observation and not subject to the laws of physical nature, in special not subject to the law, that two different and separate substances cannot fill the same space, and not subject to the law of gravity, does continue to exist.

The science treating on natural subjects confesses that it does not be within its possibilities, to either affirmatively or negatively answer this question (*agnosco*). That in consequence it has no opinion in the premises, and that indeed the question is no part of the science of natural things, but that the science about supernatural questions, theology namely, has been striving since the earliest times in the history of mankind, to settle this question with the result, that as a matter of teaching on supernatural subjects the plurality of mankind thus believe such individuality to continue in existence.

Another main point at issue between theologians (claiming to know) on the one hand and agnostics (claiming not to know) on the other hand, is expressed in the question, as to whether natural evolution (Darwinism), does sufficiently (rationally) account for life and consciousness, or whether the event of the first step to evolution does not remain unaccounted for, and whether this unexplained first fact

in serial evolution does not constitute the bridge between naturalism and supernaturalism,\* and the selection lies in this case between the proud claim of authority and the modest confession of ignorance.

Each human individual develops the faculty to make distinction between its own individuality and the totality of surrounding nature through its own sensual perception, such perception being limited in time and quantity, to the period of existence of the individual, and whichever knowledge the individual may acquire of facts preceding its own existence in time is in all cases a matter first of intellectual transmission and second of comparison. That humanity should not possess the faculty of understanding the primitive origin of all natural things is self evident, men being a part only of nature, and in consequence unable of consciousness beyond the limits of natural things.

Therefore what no man possessed the faculty of perceiving and understanding could not be truly revealed by one man to another.

Nevertheless from the time, when man first began to make the distinction between himself and his surroundings, different beliefs and creeds have taken possession of the human mind as the result of assumed revelation.

But the methodically and critically observing man of the present age is not satisfied to accept all as true, what has been a part and

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\* The question as to the controversy between "Genesis" and "Evolution" will be referred to again further on.

parcel of the belief of his ancestors, simply because he has by actual observation and test ascertained a great part of such belief to have been and to be error, contrary to fact and impossible. And as a result a considerable part of present humanity doubts all, that cannot be proven.

And it is admitted by all men having enjoyed a non-sectarian education and intellectual training:

That the exclusive and sole possible proof for any supernatural theorem must be looked for within the limits of intercourse (communication) between the supernatural and natural. Communication from the supernatural to the natural, being then called revelation, and from the natural to the supernatural being called prayer.

At the same degree, as we have succeeded in preparing and perfecting tools and instruments, by which the observations and perceptions of our senses are aided, at the same rate we have drawn into the realm of natural things and facts subjects theretofore belonging to the number of supernatural mysteries.

What a few centuries ago we would have considered as witchcraft, our courts punishing it with the penalty of death, we now pay for having it done before our eyes in the way of entertainment and amusement.

But if in this manner anything is presented to us, which is observable to our senses, but which is claimed to be supernatural, such presentation is a fraud on its face, because our senses are totally lack-



ing all capability beyond receiving impressions from *natural causes*, and whatever be at the time of observation not clearly the effect of a natural cause, will on methodical observation prove to be so, and the cause for doubt only lies in the insufficient or in the unmethodical manner of observation. In the history of early humanity almost all that man could not eat and drink, and because methodical observation was as yet not part of human faculties—was by men set apart as belonging to the supernatural. Intellectual laziness being then, as it is now, an essential quality of humanity at large, it results therefrom, that by the masses real knowledge about natural things is but very, very slowly absorbed, while these masses willingly accept on the basis of authorities to them quoted and against them claimed and without any trouble to them of intellectual labor, a great quantity of theorems relating to supernatural subjects, the quality of theorems varying considerably under the influence of surroundings, company, individual interest, ambition, vanity, pride, ancestors, tradition, habit etc., etc.”

“All human creeds originate in the acceptance of revelations. Therefore no creed can possibly be proven (as a mathematical theorem can), by intellectual construction only, unless the existence, nature and correctness of revelation be accepted on the basis of a record thereof based on the perception, (certainly not infallible) of one or another human individual, whose authority in the premises is based in all cases without any exception on the individual's own statement concerning said revelation, which

may be supported or brought about by favorable coincidences.

It is this the aid (revelation) your Eminence refers to as the human reason being in need of, in your utterance on page 303:

*If the ideas of time and space and the relation of soul to body are beyond our comprehension, we cannot be expected with our unaided reason to explain away the apparent incongruities that we find between the unseen and the visible kingdom of the universe.*

You virtually admit all, what has been hereabove stated as to the limits to human faculties. But the fact is, that agnostics ask to be excused from accepting such aid, for which the support of proof is lacking, as for the supernatural (unseen) kingdom of the universe it does.

After your Eminence has quoted on numerous pages so-called evidences for the existence of God, such as many thousands more of pages might have been filled with to the same purpose, your Eminence raises the question.

*How, then, are we to account for this moral unanimity of mankind in acknowledging a Supreme Being? There is but one rational solution to be given, which may be thus briefly expressed: God enlightens with the light of reason every man that cometh into the world. Guided by that light, we recognize the Creator from the contemplation of His works. We naturally and without effort of mind, associ-*

ate the Architect with the temple of nature luminously standing before us, just as the human voice sounding in our ears, is associated in our mind with a speaker hidden from our view. How can our soul listen in silent wonder to the heavenly music of the spheres, without admiring the divine Composer? We cannot separate the Builder from His work. We cannot admire the masterpiece without bestowing a thought on the great Artist. The connection is inseparable. The invisible Author is "clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made."<sup>1</sup>

By the same light of reason, we see also within us a moral law written on our hearts. We perceive an essential difference between right and wrong, good and evil, virtue and vice. From the recognition of this universal law, we inevitably infer a universal Lawgiver. We hear a voice within us judging us, commending or condemning us; and from the imperious judgment pronounced upon us, we conclude that there exists a Sovereign Judge.

And thus God reveals Himself to us as our Creator, as our Lawgiver, as our Judge. As our Creator, He manifests Himself to us by His Works. As our Lawgiver, He speaks to us by His law written on our hearts. As our Judge, He speaks to us by the voice of conscience. We apprehend Him by our reason,

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<sup>1</sup>Rom. I., 20.

*our moral sense, and our conscience. And, therefore, as long as man continues to exercise his intellectual and moral faculties, so long will he profess his faith in the existence of a living God.*

Assuming for the sake of argument all this to be true, what does all of this prove in favor of a "knowledge of the Supernatural." To the best it can prove only, that by a voluntary act of assumption we may be led to accept, what our intellect has no faculty to conceive

And there is nothing in all this more in favor of Christianity than of Buddhism, and again your Eminence asserts on page 252, that "the divine mission of Christ is demonstrated by the marvelous propagation and perpetuity of the Christian religion." If permanence and a striking approach to universality on the part of a creed are proofs of a divine origin, may they not be invoked on behalf of Buddhism, which started some five centuries earlier than Christianity, and includes among its votaries a much larger fraction of the human race than the Roman Catholic Church or even Christianity at large, there being known to exist on the surface of our globe: 160,000,000 idolatry practicing human beings; 180,000,000 Mohammedans; 400,000,000 Christians; 740,000,000 confessors of Buddha or Brahma.

It would bring the present letter beyond what "the busy restless class" would take in,

were I to prolong the refutation in special of your Eminence's proofs of harmony between science and revelation. Suffice it to say, that, though the human heart may at times yearn for a power stronger than man to find refuge and support with, such yearning proves naught in favor of revelation.

Of all the Revelations, the boldest, as far as the human intellect be concerned, is undoubtedly the book "Genesis", of which Moses, the leader of Isrealites on their return to Asia Minor, is the author.

And all what scientists had to show in evidence of an absolute human origin of this book namely, that it contained :

1. many facts, of which Moses had no knowledge and could have none.

2. many facts, of which the one set is in contradiction with the other set.

3. many facts, of which it can be proven, by what is within human knowledge about natural things, that they are not true or to be the reverse of truth or to be impossible.

All this your Eminence calls: "childish declamation" applying the qualification to Messrs. Huxley and Draper directly.

I omit qualifying such expressions, they do this themselves even before the most simple minded. And is your Eminence really in earnest in claiming, that these men should be hin-

dered from publishing the result of their researches by gratitude towards their predecessors on the path of research. Besides do they not believe, that their predecessors could not possibly have uttered the same results and convictions, had they arrived at them?

With the blood of hundreds of thousands has humanity conquered the freedom of conscience against inquisition, persecution and death, wielded against those indulging in such "*childish declamation*" as to assert that *revelation be a sham*.

Your Eminence notwithstanding these "childish declamations", on which of old there was the penalty of death, then deliberately and solemnly undertakes to prove that "*there will never be any collision, but the most perfect harmony will ever exist between science and religion.*" And then your Eminence continues to declaim about God, the source of science and truth, such as Christianity defends it, as if "revelation" itself were an accepted fact, and as if your Eminence had already rendered proof of what had yet to be proven.

It is this a result only of the sophistical audacity, with which nothing is called "reason" but what will reason out the theorems, as the church teaches them.

And the rabiate dictum "*that is (this material world) shall have an end*" (page 305), this contradiction in total of all the results of natu-

ral science, is quoted in proof, of how the church stands on the side of reason. And the reason of all scientists, who were once deeply steeped in Christianity is relegated to *incompetency* by the quotation from Paul: "It is morally impossible," says Paul, "for those who were once illuminated by faith, who have tasted also the heavenly gift, who were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and who have fallen away by apostacy, to return once more to the faith of their fathers."

If your Eminence nevertheless makes the attempt to harmonize so-called revelation (the church) with the acknowledged results of science, your Eminence assumes the same position, as the Church has invariably assumed, namely, to explain away the Church's former teachings as soon as reason had succeeded to produce incontrovertible proof to the contrary.

We are told for instance, on page 313, that "*it is often erroneously assumed, that Scriptures propound doctrines, which they never professed to teach. The sacred volume was not intended by its divine author to give us a scientific treatise on astronomy or cosmogony or geology, or even a complete series of chronology or genealogy. These matters are incidentally introduced to illustrate a higher subject. The purpose of the Scriptures is to recount God's supernatural relations with man-*

*kind, his providential government of the world, and man's moral obligations to his Creator."*

It is not so long ago, when the church assumed the authority to settle scientific questions of astronomy, cosmogony and geology on the very contrary claim to your Eminence's assertion hereabove quoted, namely, that the true source for all human knowledge be the Bible (the word of the Lord) and the Roman Church's interpretation thereof. But your Eminence may permit the undersigned to follow your Eminence's endeavors to explain away the position formerly held by the Roman Church.

Your Eminence proceeding to a particular example states:

*"When for instance the Sacred Text declares, that the sun stood still in the heavens, it simply gives expression to the miraculous prolongation of the day; and this in popular language, such as even now, with our improved knowledge of astronomy, we employ, for we speak of the rising and the setting of the sun as if, according to the Ptolemaic system, we still believed, that he revolves around the earth".*

But your Eminence does omit to state, that this very method of expressing contrary to facts in our daily intercourse is only one of the many consequences of the Church sustaining,



favoring, upholding absolutely erroneous teachings. What a hard fight with the church or its followers have Copernicus, Kepler and Galileo had in trying to disabuse humanity of this very error! Kepler's book "Epitome of the Copernican Astronomy" was on appearance (1622) placed on the list of prohibited books by the Congregation of the index at Rome.

Kepler's biographer Sir David Brewster M. A., D. C. L. states p. 223 of "Martyrs of Science," "*the moment Kepler learned this from his correspondent Remus, he was thrown into great alarm, and requested from him some information respecting the terms and consequences of the censure, which was thus pronounced upon his work. He was afraid, that it might compromise his personal safety, if he went to Italy;—that he might be compelled to retract his opinions;—that the censure might extend to Austria;—that the sale of his work would be ruined; and that he must either abandon his country or his opinions.*

Passing over from Astronomy to Geology your Eminence has the following: (p. 314).

"*The results of geological investigation, by which it is claimed, that ages must have elapsed between the formation of matter and the creation of man, would seem to conflict with the Book of Genesis, which states, that*

*all vegetable and animal life was created within the space of six days. But the Church, as is well known, has never defined the meaning to be attached to those days of Genesis. We are at liberty, as far as the Church is concerned, and if the deductions of science are incontrovertible, we are compelled to ascribe an indefinite period of years to each day. The context itself insinuates, that the day cannot be restricted to twenty-four hours, since, for the first three days, there was no sun to measure their duration: and in the second chapter of Genesis the word day is manifestly used to express an indefinite period of time employed in the creation of the material universe.”*

Your Eminence's statement, that “*the context itself ‘insinuates’, that the day cannot be restricted to twenty-four hours, even for the first three days, since for the first three days, there was no sun to measure their duration*” by can be accounted for only by the easy going, futile method with which your E. deals with great scientific questions in contrast with the intense care bestowed on explaining away doubts as to the correctness of Genesis.

It never was the sun by which the day was measured. One revolution (return of the same point to the same location relative to the centre of its gravitation) of the earthball has always measured the day. Genesis says nothing

about the ball being set a rolling later on. So it must be assumed that "Genesis" intended to reveal, that the Lord set the ball a rolling on the day of creation, and then there was the condition given to measure the day by. But the fact in the premises is, that the Roman Church has forcibly receded now from the position of claiming to possess in Bible (the so-called word of the Lord) and in apostolic tradition the exclusive source for all truth and science. That much has been decidedly gained, and it is impossible for the Roman Church to now cover up its own tracks.

Besides your Eminence is well aware, that the objections of scientists to the teaching of Genesis do not turn merely or mainly rest on the *duration* of the epoch signified by the Hebrew word translated "day," but relate rather to the *order*, in which several creative processes are said to have taken place.

Your Eminence affirms that "*the chronological order of Moses is borne out by the researches of geologists, who have discovered that vegetable fossils are anterior to animal remains, and that those of the lower animals are more ancient than those of any human skeletons ever found.*"

Now this order as described in Genesis, is not so unconditionally admitted, as your Eminence claims it to be, Natural Science having wiped out altogether the division lines be-

tween the vegetable and animal kingdom, the two being so much blended one with the other, that but for the reverence to bible and habit, the distinction would be obsolete altogether. Your Eminence might, in order to prove with scientific thoroughness, have taken up the Scriptural assertions *seriatim* and explained more explicitly some of their inconsistencies in respect of creative order with the universally accepted conclusions of scientists. We read in Genesis, for instance, that the earth, one of the least considerable of the planets, was created one "day" before the sun, the center of the system to which the earth belongs. We also read, that vegetable life, with its infinite variety of herb and tree, was brought forth at a date anterior to the existence of solar light and heat. Again we read, that winged fowl were brought forth on the "day" preceding that, on which creeping things or reptiles were created, although, if anything be considered an established fact in natural history, it is, that reptiles preceded birds. These are the crucial points in the record of Genesis, to harmonize which, with the results of scientific investigation, would, indeed, constitute a greater marvel of Christian apologetics than as yet has been attempted.

Again your Eminence in the 19th chapter, bearing the caption, "Origin and Destiny of Man a viewed by Modern Unbelief,"

with great assurance denies three things: first, that mankind be descended from several pairs of progenitors instead of the single pair named in the scriptural record; second, that mankind be descended from the lower animals, or, to speak more specifically, from anthropoid apes; third, that species be produced by variation and adaptation to environment under the law of natural selection instead of being each the outcome of an independent act of creation. As to the first negation it may be said, that scientists themselves are not agreed upon the question, whether all men are descended from a single pair. To many, however, it seems more in accordance with analogy to assume, that all or most of the members of particular species of ape developed man-like aptitudes and thus took the first steps in the evolution of the *homo*, than to attribute this step to two individuals. The matter being, nevertheless, *sub judice* the teachers both of science and religion are for the present at liberty to deny or to affirm. With regard to the repudiation of the theory, that mankind be descended from anthropoid apes, the physiologist will acknowledge, that the last link is as yet missing in the chain of evidence brought forward in support of that conclusion. But, as up to a few years ago, a similar gap existed in the genealogy of the horse, which has since, been

clearly filled, the prudence practiced by Papacy on so many other occasions, where notwithstanding all the revelations at the command of the Pope and of the *propaganda fidei* at Rome the decision was deferred or refused on account of the uncertainty of the ground, the church did stand on, might be commended.

Were it not for some other discrepancies and anachronisms as against the story told in the book Genesis, the Roman Catholic Church might adopt Mr. A. R. Wallace's view with regard to the origin of man. Mr. Wallace, in his latest contribution to the discussion of this topic, admits, that the physical part of man must have descended from some simian progenitor, but he insists, that the step from the ape to the man could not have been taken without the infusion of a soul, which sounds quite biblical.

In affirming the independent creation and immutability of species your Eminence discards a belief, which now is universal among scientists. There is notwithstanding this denial on your Eminence's part no known man of science now living and enjoying the respect of his co-laborers, who rejects the fundamental principle of Darwinism, viz., that species are evolved by variation under the laws of natural selection.

The real question at issue seems to be between the Church and agnostics : Shall human-

ity be deceived concerning what it would like to know but cannot know? The church answers: I do not deceive, because I was told what I teach by revelation, which I believe to have told the truth.

And agnostics answer:

Those revelations are unproven, and there is suspicion, that they were the product of illusion and hallucination or even of fraud right out. Hence we doubt, disbelieve and remain satisfied with believing only what can be proven.

### THIRD LETTER.

#### ON MIRACLES.

*Your Eminence*

May permit me to aver, that from the preceding statement concerning the limits of human intellectual faculties it is evident, that as man does not possess the possibility of ascertaining whatever be not part and parcel of nature, it is likewise not in his faculty to ascertain the negative of any supernatural theorem, and as a consequence acceptance or refusal remains a matter of individual selection.

*Atheists* say: There is no Supreme Selfconscious Being distinct from nature as such.

*Pantheists* say: Nature and the Selfconscious Supreme Being are one.

Both these philosophical schools are on the same side with Christianity in either asserting or denying what is beyond human knowledge.

But *Agnostics* say: We do not know but what is part of observable nature and that not all and beyond that nothing. Whenever man follows his selection and inclination in assuming one or another of the theorems advanced concerning the so-called supernatural,



whatever, he may thus assume, can never become knowledge as the result of observation by our senses, but will and must remain the product of a voluntary resolution to assume as true what can not be proven. All pretenses to the contrary are the results either of illogical construction or of distortion of facts.

It being admitted, that all creeds (dogmas) can find their justification only in revelation from the supernatural, but having shown at the same time, that it is beyond the human faculty to perceive the supernatural, it remains to consider the possibility or probability of a revelation from the supernatural taking the form of natural things and substances. Assuming, that such taking of a natural form by the supernatural be possible, then there are two ways, in which possibility may be assumed to evolve into a fact.

The one alternate way assumed as possible be the penetration of universal nature as such by the supernatural.

In this assumed case all, what has been said with regard to nature, applies to the supernatural also, it having become identical with natural substance and having been proven to be subject to natural laws and to be observable by men, to the extent only of natural existence.

The other alternate way assumed as possible

would be the identification of the supernatural with selected, single, sporadic natural objects.

And such identification of the second class is ordinarily claimed under the name of divine quality in otherwise human beings or of miracle as the substance of revelation, on which creeds are based and built.

In accordance therewith your Eminence gives the assurance (page 240) that miracles have always been justly regarded as the most luminous and convincing evidence in support of the doctrines they confirm, and this certainly would be so, were it not for the peculiar state of affairs, that since humanity acquired the faculty of methodical observation and tests, all miracles have ceased, and none of those on record can be repeated, and such records as exist of miracles, when subjected to critical investigation, have invariably proven insufficient to substantiate the facts.

And the records of the most miraculous of all miracles the creation of the universe as recorded in Moses's book, "Genesis" has been proven to be contradictory in itself and the next thereto the taking of human individual shape of a tripartite interest in divinity itself is seriously menaced in its credit by the non-existence of secular proof of the existence at any time or anywhere of the individual so referred to.

With all this the distinction should be made as between a *believer* on the testimony of *miracles* and a *believer* without *miracles*.

He, who requires miracles in order to believe, is an old fashioned agnostic of a lower intellectual order, because, when he imagined he saw a *miracle*, his infantile intellect accepted such miracle as proof, and he believed in consequence.

In order to completely carry out the doctrine, that to believe be a virtue and the result of divine grace, a dogma of the Roman Church, to which I shall be compelled to again refer later on, it would appear more consistent in the Roman Church, not even to point to miracles in support of her faith. As to this Mohammed did take a more correct *position*, because in Chapter *XIII*. (near the end) of the Korân he quotes the following as to him *revealed* by the Lord:

“Though a Korân were *revealed*, by which mountains should be removed, or the earth cleaved in sunder, or the dead be caused to speak, *it would be in vain*.”

— It is thus, that Mohammed could dispense with miracles and nevertheless demand, “*faith*” on the part of his followers; and he formulated this demand in the same chapter as follows:

“To this purpose have we sent down the Korân a rule of judgment.”

The Roman Church nevertheless has continued to claim miracles, the records on beatification bristling with their recital. And even in modern times such things as the motion of the eyes of the picture of the Virgin at Siena and the apparition of the Virgin in the tree at *Lourdes* have been supported in their credit by the clergy of the Roman Church. And it is generally believed, that the time has come, when it may be considered as opportune, that the Virgin make her appearance somewhere on this continent, so as to prepare for an object of pilgrimage, the practice thereof having always been essentially a practice of the Roman Church, the same materially contributing towards the intensity of faith in the minds of the pilgrims and giving an outlet to the fervor of all desirous of becoming connected with some miraculous event.

In fact, miracles have been claimed by the Roman Church to such an extent, that a reaction must result. As a consequence reasoning humanity shrunk back from them, and it is at present rather highly appreciated by the common mortal, that so little is seen of them, and this is attributed to scepticism as to their very existence.

Since the test of methodical observation has in this matter done away with illusions, hallucinations, false pretences, miracles are not

easily indulged in either by saints or other common mortals, except by the irrepressible spiritualists, who notwithstanding the manifold exposures of intentional fraud on the part of their mediums, continue this trade of deception, and indeed the Roman Church must be congratulated to have nothing in common with them not even miracles. “*What fools these mortals be*” to have accepted miracles at all in the way they have done.

## FOURTH LETTER.

### THE REAL POSITION OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH TOWARDS AGNOSTICISM IN CONTRAST WITH CARDINAL GIBBONS' ATTEMPT TO PROVE THE SUPER- NATURAL.

Will your Eminence permit to assume for the sake of argument, that an agnostic by the reading of your Eminence's book had become convinced, *first* of the existence of the supernatural and of the Supreme Being as the self-conscious creator of the universe, *second* of the immortality of the human soul, *third* of the divinity of Christ, *fourth* of the Roman Pontifex being the true representative of Christ on earth, and of the Roman Church possessing the real and true teachings of Christ.

Would with all this he have become a Roman Catholic, in full harmony with the teachings of the Roman Church? Inconceivable as this may appear on the face of the assertion, your Eminency knows, that then as yet he should not be a true Roman Catholic, and why not? Simply because it is heresy, according to the Roman Church, that the true catholic's faith

be the result of intellectual conclusion,\* or that intellectual conclusion alone be the proper basis for such creed, while the virtue of faith is thought to be such proper basis and a gift from divine grace. Thus were a hundred thousand agnostics ready as a consequence of your Eminence's persuasion to abandon agnosticism, because their intellects had been led by your Eminence to conclusions otherwise in harmony with the teachings of the Roman Church, your Eminence would before admitting them have to demand as the agent of the Church the abjuration on their part of their belief being the exclusive result of their intellectual labors, and your Eminence would have to demand the acknowledgement on their part, that their belief and faith be founded in divine grace, and not on their own intellectual labors.

In other words the agnostic can enter the fold of the Roman Church only as a matter of choice, selection and inclination and not as a matter of intellectual conclusion, the agnostic by a voluntary act assuming to have been endowed (as if by an unprovable supernatural power, enchantment) with the grace of faith.

Strange as it may appear, divinity does not

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\* Reference is made to the decrees setting the books of Prof. Hermes on the *Index Librorum Prohibitorum* as containing heresy and to other evidence to the same effect.

bestow such grace on agnostics as a rule, and your Eminence should therefore feel rather pity with these disfavored mortals, and it would be more rational and more charitable, if your Eminence would have words of kindness and of amiable persuasion for them instead of rational reasoning, which will do them no good, and of rebukes and accusation, which are not founded on fact.

And is it not giving an evidence of weakness of your Eminence's cause to attempt to convince the intellectually untrained, while the professionals in the matter of philosophy and research are met with the declaration, that they should be considered as *hors du combat*.

It thus happens, that the undersigned raises the claim of more truly defining the road to Roman Catholicism in special or to orthodoxy in general, than your Eminence has defined it in the book on "Our Christian Heritage."

Let the membership of any orthodox creed community be a matter of selection, inclination and of the welfare of the people at large, rather than to attempt to convince (since violence is no longer applicable), by reasoning out theorems being beyond the conception of human reason. Let religion be a matter of sentiment and of charity rather than of dogma and intellect.



## FIFTH LETTER.

### DIFFERENT METHODS OF PROPAGATING THE ROMAN CATHOLIC FAITH UNDER DIFFERENT CIRCUMSTANCES.

*Your Eminence*

Creeds, being practically amongst the human race a matter of surrounding influences and of individual inclinations, are essentially a matter of individual right also to the extent only of non-interference with the equal right of all other human individuals, and to the limit as far as so-called religious practices are concerned, of non-intrusion on the equal welfare of others. As a consequence thereof the government of worldly affairs violates the equal rights of one part of living humanity by favoring the creed of another part, and no government can be a just government to all citizens, unless it be totally and absolutely disconnected from any and all creeds, while it may regulate by law on a basis of equality the relations of creed communities to natural things (Persons and property).''

And all creeds being based either on assumptions with regard to supernatural theorems or on the assertions of individual men (or women) as to communications received from the unproven supernatural realm, no creed can claim an absolute rational proof for the necessity of being accepted by humanity at large. Their legitimate medium of propagation should therefore be *persuasion* alone. But the history

of mankind is evidence of the tendency in some creeds (Catholicism, Mohammedanism) to use brutal power and physical compulsion for such propagation.

If (on page 268) your Eminence asserts: *The church draws no sword to enforce her authority*, then this is only one of the many sophistical differentiations between “doing and having done,” or “having caused to be done.” The church educated its followers at all times to the belief “that to propagate A. M. D. G. the realm of the church would justify war, shedding of blood, compulsion and tyranny, and history does contradict your Eminence in so many instances that none need be quoted.

But as the less educated are also expected to read this present protest against the Propaganda as advocated by your Eminence, I may be permitted to refer to the one of many cases, to the decrees of Crusades by the Popes Innocent III. and Honorius III. against the followers of Vaux and their protector Count Raimond of Albigeois and Toulouse—to the atrocities committed under and devastation resulting from these decrees, (1212–1229) and to the completion of the *conversion* of the Albigeois by the Roman Catholic Institution of the *Holy Inquisition*.

And the tendency of the Roman Church towards using arbitrary power for the suppression of its antagonists has not left it altogether. Its expression only is modified.

The tendency of conquest by the use of sword, fire and rack has modernized in the United States of North America into a propaganda by persuasion for political power and for a majority of voters as instrumental to the ruling power of the Roman Hierarchy.

And this propaganda does not exclusively take shape in your Eminence's address to the people of this republic, but it receives a powerful impulse also from outside by the bold outcry of "Independence or Annexation" as now openly raised by the Roman Catholic press of the Province of Ottawa, always ready to carry out its instructions received from the Hierarchy. And the flag thus raised has the evident object to bring about an increase of the Roman Catholic voting power within the United States of North America. The Roman Church thus seems to be preparing for its conquest of these United States, by more refined methods than those applied under Louis VIII. and Louis IX. in France or under Spanish and Roman rule on the South American Continent in former centuries.

If the means applicable under altered circumstances have turned out to be "persuasion" almost exclusively, it is certainly great progress of humanity, that "persuasion" no longer takes such shape, as it took in the case of Galileo, and would have taken with Copernicus and Kepler had they been within Roman

jurisdiction. And it is on the other hand an honor to the church, that as in the case of Cardinal Hohenzoller at Galileo's time, so at all times there have been prominent men in the fold of the church free of zealotic fanaticism.

But to *persuasion* there are as yet sundry modifications. So your Eminence attempts to persuade the North American people, that free thinkers and agnostics are no better, than ancient pagans were, a position being true to the general tendency of the Roman Church.

In fact the Church takes towards heretics (and now towards agnostics) the same unjustified position as taken by the pagan Tacitus (your Eminence on page 262) took towards Christianity calling it "*a detestable superstition provoking the just hatred of humanity.*" And the same consequences are the result now as they were then namely: persecution on the one hand and martyrdom and propagation jointly on the other.

And then as now the persecutors (p. 262) *do not think it worth while to inquire into the charges, which prejudice and hate had invented against an inoffensive people.*"

And at the present age (p. 262) "*The conservative element in society opposes because it (agnosticism) is new, and because the (old) worship had the authority of venerable antiquity. This is the religion, which they and their fathers had followed for generations, and they can not calmly suffer this new sort to disturb the old order of things.*"

Your Eminence states (on p. 9) as follows:

*While these pages are passing through the press, we are informed by the daily papers, that an anti-Christian Sunday-school has been opened in a public hall in Baltimore, and that weekly sessions are regularly held there. We learn from the same source, that some Protestant clergymen of our city have urged the Mayor to suppress this infidel school.*

WAIVING THE QUESTION OF RIGHT WHICH THE CIVIL AUTHORITIES MAY HAVE TO INTERFERE IN MATTERS OF THIS KIND, *I do not believe, that any radical cure of this religious distemper can be effected by repressive measures. It is not by coercion, but by the voluntary surrender of the citadel of the heart, that man is converted. Coercion only drives the poison into the social body, where it secretly ferments. Our divine Saviour never invoked the sword to vindicate His doctrines. He rebuked his disciple, when he once drew the sword in defense of His Master, and commanded him to put it back into its scabbard. "The weapons of our warfare," says the Apostle, "are not carnal," but spiritual; they are the weapons of argument, of persuasion and charity. The only sword I would draw against the children of unbelief, is "the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God;" and the only fire I would light against them, is the fire of divine love, which our Lord*

*came to enkindle in the hearts of men. In a word, I would convince them, that Christianity "is profitable for all things, having the promise of the life that now is," as well as "of that which is to come."*

Your Eminence thus yields to circumstances only. If the Roman Church possessed as yet political influence or power enough for repressive measures, the Roman Catholic conscience would forbid to your Eminence *to waive the question of right to interfere in matters* of the teaching of heresy in the United States. Your Eminence could not well contradict this assumption, because it rests on the precedents and ecclesiastical practices, as demonstrated for centuries and on the teachings of the Roman Church as such.

That Jesus of Nazareth forbade to his disciple to use brutal power, has absolutely no value for demonstrating, that the Roman Church did or would do the same. The practices of the Church in this matter as in many others have for many years not been the practice of Christ. To deny this, because the Catholic Sovereigns and the Church were two, would be subterfuge only. Had Christ ever assumed the exterior and appearance of a prince, as your Eminence does; the judgment of Pontius Pilatus would have been a just one instead of an unjust one, such

as the story goes. What in the teaching of Christ justifies the Roman Pontifex in claiming, that he cannot (*non possumus*) relinquish temporal power and possession without betraying his mission as the high priest of the Church of Christ?

There are many good reasons to believe, that were Jesus of Nazareth to reappear on the earth at the present moment, he would not find it in accordance with his own teachings and prescriptions to belong to the Roman Catholic Church and much less to live as a prelate of the church does.

To compare Christianity of later centuries with Paganism of earlier centuries has no element, by which those living at present can be convinced, either that their free thought or agnosticism sets them back into paganism, nor that the Christian practices of the present day are any better, than those of free thinkers would be, did they have the temporal means, as the church has, to practice with, or were they sufficiently bent in this direction and sufficiently numerous to collect the same worldly wealth as the Roman Church does.

It is traditional with the Roman Church to apply all what its prominent defenders against paganism once said against pagans, also to modern searchers for facts and truths. But

the practice nevertheless is not a good one, because nothing can thus be rationally proven.

Before leaving the allusions of your Eminence's book I beg leave to state, that the question as to who, the pagan or the christian human individual, enjoyed the greater happiness in quantity and quality, has been many times discussed and differently answered, but whichever way the decision may fall, it is irrelevant as to the questions under consideration, other social conditions relating to the same questions.

Under equal surrounding conditions it would appear probable, that as against the one, whose conscience is continuously troubled by doubting what he holds himself in duty bound to believe, the other one, whose convictions, conscience and duties are in peace and harmony, is more apt to feel happy than the former.

One of the reasons, why the Roman Catholic Church be eligible to a higher degree than other religious creeds, your Eminence has claimed to be the Roman Church's anti-slavery championship.

What an enormous error is it to attribute *the melting away of human slavery to the effulgent rays of the gospel*, if under *gospel* the teachings of the Roman Catholic clergy are meant.



Has there ever been such a thing heard of, as a conflict between the Roman Church and the Southern slaveholders?

The Roman clergy confined itself in this case, as it had in all others, to admonish the slave owner to charity and the slave to patient endurance, but the institution as such was not known to be contrary to the doctrine and effulgent rays of the lights of the Roman Church. A Baltimore or New Orleans archbishop of ante-civil war times would have very much hesitated before preaching the melting away of slavery.

In 1839 for the first time, and only when Protestant England was practically suppressing slavery, Pope Gregory XVI. enlisted the church in the same endeavor.

Thus the Roman Church modified her methods of propagation of faith from the application of brutal power to incrimination of her adversaries and again to sundry varieties of persuasion. One of the later phases shown is your Eminence's fictitious proposition to meet agnostics on their own ground of proof by intellectual labor. The proposition to persuade the intellectually untrained being the latest phase of Roman propaganda would be an advantageous move, if it were to pass unheeded and without protest, and this republic might one day awaken, were the move to be successful, to the fact, that it be under the

authority and rule of the Roman Pontifex, who then without any doubt would supercede your Eminence or your Eminence's successor as the head of the Roman Hierarchy of the United States of North America and would find all the church's boldest visions as to temporal power realized by the influence his Holiness would then exercise on our political powers, and might even find it opportune to be elected President of the United States through a majority of Roman Catholic voters, thus restoring the so-much coveted temporal power on this continent, it having proven impossible to restore it in modern Rome.

My next letter will more specifically consider the eventual practical results of the Roman Church propagating in the United States during the coming century at the same rate as it has during the past century.

## SIXTH LETTER.

THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH IS A SERIOUS  
DANGER IN ITSELF TO THE INSTITUTIONS  
OF THE UNITED STATES OF  
NORTH AMERICA.

*Your Eminence*

When all the facts be considered, as they exist, it will appear, that the teachings and the practices of the Roman Catholic Church are absolutely and totally incompatible with the free institutions of this republic, and that the Roman Catholic Church as such is in revolt against these institutions, and is by its very nature and tendencies bound to destroy the free institutions of this republic as speedily, as it will control a majority of voters.

With a majority of voters adhering to Protestantism the North American people would continue to enjoy home rule and the fruits of the great reform movements in the 16th and 17th centuries and of the 30 years war, while under a majority of catholics exercising sovereignty in the United States, under the authority of a Roman Pontifex, home-rule would be as effectively dead, as it was before our first American revolution. And so much worse yet would foreign rule be, as it would

involve not our temporal wealth but the freedom of our consciences and convictions.

It is this civil and political side of the question, which causes your Eminence's book to be considered as a danger to the free institutions of the North American people. And in consequence there is sufficient reason, that it should not be allowed to pass without a word of warning and contradiction, such as those from the very reverently undersigned.

To show, that this be confessedly so on the part of those in the fold of the Roman Catholic Church, their following official declaration prepared under the watchful eyes of the hierarchy and issued by *The first Congress of Catholic Laymen in the United States* is here set forth :

“The meeting of the first Congress of Catholic laymen in the United States to celebrate the hundredth anniversary of the establishment of the American hierarchy is an event of the greatest importance to our Church and country. It would seem eminently proper that we, the laymen of the Church, should meet and renew our allegiance to the doctrine we profess; that we should show to our fellow-countrymen the true relations that exist between *the Church that we obey and love and the government of our choice*; that we should proclaim that unity of sentiment upon all subjects presented to us, which has ever been the source of Catholic strength, and that in a spirit of perfect charity towards every denomination we should freely exchange our views in relation to all matters, which effect us as members of the Catholic Church.

“In the first place, then, we rejoice at the marvelous development of our country, and regard with

just pride *the part taken by Catholics in such development*. In the words of the pastoral issued by the Archbishops and Bishops of the United States assembled in the third Plenary Council of Baltimore, 'we claim to be acquainted both with the laws, institutions and spirit of the Catholic Church, and with the laws, institutions and spirit of our country, and we emphatically declare *that there is no antagonism between them.*'

"We repudiate with equal earnestness the assertion, that we need to lay aside any of our devotedness to our Church to be true Americans and the insinuation, that we need to *abate any of our love for our country's principles and institutions to be faithful Catholics*. We believe that our country's heroes were the instruments of the God of nations in establishing their home of freedom. To both the Almighty and to his instruments in the work, we look with grateful reverence, and to maintain the inheritance of freedom which they have left us, should it ever—which God forbid—be imperiled, our Catholic citizens will be found to stand forward as one man, ready to pledge anew 'their lives, their fortunes and their sacred honor.'

"We cannot, however, shut our eyes to the many dangers that threaten the destruction of the social fabric, upon which depend our peace, our liberty and our free institutions. Although our wealth has increased and prosperity abounds, our cities have multiplied and our States increased, we find under the shadow of this system incipient pauperism, discontented men, women and children without the benefits of education, without advantages of religion, deprived of any share in that abundance or participation in the blessings which through our free institutions God Almighty has designed for the people of our land.

Remembering the distinction between Pagan and

Christian civilization as to the heed to be paid to the right of the individual, we favor those means, measures and systems by which these blessings are to be secured to all alike.\*

“We recognize, next in importance to religion itself, education as one of the chief factors in forming the character of the individual, the virtue of the citizen and promoting the advance of a true civilization. Therefore we are committed to a sound popular education, which demands not only physical and intellectual, but also the moral and religious training of our youth. *As in the State schools, no provision is made for teaching religion, we must continue to support our own schools, colleges and universities already established, and multiply and perfect others, so that the benefits of a Christian education may be brought within the reach of every Catholic child within these United States.*

“We also recognize among the three great educational agencies, besides the church and school, the Christian home. ‘The root of the commonwealth is the homes of the people.’ Whatever imperils its permanency, security and peace is a blow aimed not only at individual rights, but it is an attempt to subvert civil society and Christian civilization.

“Therefore we denounce the existence and development of Mormonism and the tendency to multiply causes of divorces *a vinculo* as plague spots on our civilization, a discredit to our Government, a degradation of the female sex and a standing menace to the sanctity of the marriage bond. We likewise hold, that it is not sufficient for individual Catholics to shun bad or dangerous societies, but that they ought to take part in good and useful ones. The importance of Catholic societies, and

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\* How does this correspond with the Hierachy's position towards the “Anti-Poverty” movement and Rev. McGlynn.  
THE AUTHOR.

the necessity of union and concert of action to accomplish aught, are manifest. These societies should be organized on a religious and not on a race or national basis. We must always remember that the Catholic Church knows no North or South, no East or West, no race, no color. *National societies, as such, have no place in the Church in this country, but, like this Congress itself, they should be Catholic and American."*

"We commend the plan and form of the St. Vincent de Paul Society as a typical Catholic society. It is impossible to enumerate all the societies, whose labors have done so much in the past to succor the poor and alleviate human misery: and it must therefore be left to individual action to select the field in which each shall aid in religious and charitable work. As our young men, however, are the hope of the future, we especially commend them to the support and encouragement of Catholics. As these were commended in a special manner by the Plenary Council, we recommend the establishment of these societies throughout the land and urge upon the laity the importance of supporting them by every means within their power. We recommend the extension of societies designed to assist the widows and children of deceased members, societies for the relief of the poor and distressed, not forgetting measures tending to improve the condition of inmates of our penal institutions.

"Another danger which menaces our republic is the constant conflict between capital and labor. We, therefore, at all times must view with feelings of regret and alarm any antagonism existing between them, because thereby society itself is imperiled. With the Church, we condemn Nihilism, Socialism and Communism, and we equally condemn the heartless greed of capital. The remedy must be sought in the mediation of the Church through her

action on the individual conscience and thereby on society, teaching each its respective duties as well as rights: and in such civil enactments as have been rendered necessary by these altered conditions. As stated by His Eminence Cardinal Gibbons, 'labor has its sacred rights as well as its dignity. Paramount among the rights of the laboring classes is their privilege to organize or to form themselves into societies for their mutual protection and benefit. In honoring and upholding labor the nation is strengthening its own hands as well as paying a tribute to worth, for a contented and happy working class is the best safeguard of the Republic.' "

"We disapprove of the employment of very young minors—whether male or female—in factories as tending to dwarf and retard the true development of the wage-earners of the future. We pledge ourselves to co-operate with the clergy in discussing and in solving those great economic, educational and social questions which effect the interests and well-being of the church, the country and society at large."

"We respectfully protest against any change in the policy of the Government in the matter of the education of the Indians, by which they will be deprived of Christian teaching. That the amelioration and promotion of the physical and moral culture of the negro race is a subject of the utmost concern, and we pledge ourselves to assist our clergy in all ways tending to effect any improvement in their condition."

"We are in favor of Catholics taking greater part than they have hitherto taken in general philanthropic and reformatory movements. The obligation to help the needy and to instruct the ignorant is not limited to the needy and ignorant of our own communion, but we are concerned, both as Catholics and Americans, in the reformation of all the criminals



and the support of all the poor in the country. By mingling more in such works of National virtue as our non-Catholic fellow-citizens are engaged in and taking our proper share in the management of prisons and hospitals we might exert a Catholic influence outside of our own body, make ourselves better known and infuse into those good works something of supernatural charity, and at the same time that we are solacing the unfortunate and reforming the erring; and we should be able to insist on Catholic inmates being freely ministered to by their own clergy. We must assert and secure the right of conscience of Catholics in all institutions under public control.

“There are many other Christian issues in which Catholics could come together with non-Catholics and shape civil legislation for the public weal. In spite of rebuff and injustice and overlooking zealotry we should seek alliance with non-Catholics for proper Sunday observance. Without going over to the Judaic Sabbath we can bring the masses over to the moderation of the Christian Sunday. To effect this we must set our faces sternly against the sale of intoxicating beverages on Sunday. The corrupting influence of saloons in politics, the crime and pauperism resulting from excessive drinking, require legislative restriction which we can aid in procuring by joining our influence with that of the other enemies of intemperance. Let us resolve that drunkenness shall be made odious and give practical encouragement and support to Catholic temperance societies. We favor the passage and enforcement of laws rigidly closing saloons on Sunday and forbidding the sale of liquors to minors and intoxicated persons.

Efforts should be made to promote Catholic reading. It is our duty to support liberally good Catholic journals and books and acquaint ourselves with Catholic doctrine and opinion on the important

questions constantly coming to the front and demanding right answers and just practical solutions. There are comparatively few Catholics who cannot afford the cost of a Catholic journal or who do not spend more for a story paper or a novel than the price of one.

“We not only recommend Catholics to subscribe more generally for Catholic periodicals, quarterly, monthly or weekly, but look with eagerness for the establishment of daily Catholic newspapers in our large cities and a Catholic associated press agency. If our Catholic literature is not equal to the standard by which we measure it, this is due, at least in part, to the slight encouragement now given to Catholic writers of the better type. If the best Catholic books were extensively purchased and read, more would be written which we should be proud of. We recommend, therefore, the work of Catholic circulating libraries and reading circles and also efforts to have the best Catholic books and periodicals introduced into public libraries. But we do not call all books Catholic that are written by Catholics, nor a journal which is Catholic on one page and infidel or immoral on another.

“As fast as practicable we hope for the introduction of proper church music in all our churches where other music is now heard. The music should help devotion at the divine service, and not be such as tends to divert the mind from heavenly thoughts. Efforts should be made to have the congregation join in the singing—a Catholic custom formerly, but practised in only a few churches nowadays.

“We cannot conclude without recording our solemn conviction that the absolute freedom of the Holy See is equally indispensable to the peace of the Church and the welfare of mankind. We demand in the name of humanity and justice that this freedom be scrupulously respected by all secular govern-

ments. We protest against the assumption by any such government of a right to affect the interests or control the action of our Holy Father by any form of legislation or other public act to which his full approbation has not been previously given, and we pledge to Leo XIII., the worthy Pontiff, to whose hands Almighty God has committed the helm of Peter's bark amid the tempests of this stormy age, the loyal sympathy and unstinted aid of all his spiritual children in vindicating that perfect liberty which he justly claims as his sacred and inalienable right".

The foregoing *manifesto's* main characteristic is precisely expressed by the French proverb: *Qui s'excuse s'accuse*. (He who excuses himself involuntarily accuses himself). Would any of the protestant sects find it necessary to declare: "*That there is no antagonism between laws, institutions and spirit of the Church on the one hand and of this country on the other.*"

It does appear to all non-Roman Catholics, that such *antagonism* indeed does exist and that the above sweeping assertion is bluntly contradicted by other parts of the same manifesto. The cutting loose and abjuration from all dependence and obedience to foreign potentates is a first condition to citizenship of these United States of North America. In contrast therewith is contained and prominently expressed in the hereabove copied official proclamation of the Catholic Laymen (voters) of the United States, the voluntary declaration, that these Laymen *do obey* the church, that they love

it, while the government of the United States is alluded to as the government of their (practical) choice.

Again while it is declared, that there be no antagonism between the laws, institutions and spirit of the Catholic Church on the one hand and of this country on the other, the manifesto declares in contradiction thereto the intention to destroy our institution of non-sectarian public schools.

As shown in the beginning of my fifth letter a government just to all has indeed no other choice but to be unsectarian in all its laws and practices. If the government of the United States is practically unloyal to this first principle of a just government by giving practical preference to protestant clergymen as against those of other confessions, as against ignoring them all, then this failing in one point though an encouragement for Roman Catholics for further infringement on the fundamental principles of our institutions, can form no justification therefore.

But the difference as between the two is, that the infringement on the part of protestantism is one of petty practice not involving a fundamental principle and being a concession to the majority's still existing intellectual bondage under orthodoxism; while Romanism advances claims being incompatible with the fundamental principles of our government.

Be it assumed for a moment, that the Roman Catholic Church after a successful propagation amongst the *busy ones, having neither inclination nor time* to consider the question of creed, with the thoroughness it evidently deserves, or amongst the very class your Eminence's address (book) is directed to—should have become possessed of a majority of voters in the United States.

Are they not organized for election purposes more thoroughly than any other political body on this continent? Can there be a question as to what practical turn the political action of this organization would take, even in case the appearance of independent nominations be preserved? *Obedience to the Church* must govern such nominations as often as any question relating to the interest of the Church be at issue. And the Church will never fail to give her order and command, there being presumably always a question at issue, in which the church as well as the Catholic conscience is involved, as for instance the question of sectarian or non-sectarian public schools—of the temporal possessions and civil sovereignty of the pope, the suppression or non-suppression by the civil power of educational institutions founded by freethinkers or agnostics, your Eminence waiving the later question evidently only for the present—the suppression in the public press of what to the Roman

Church is “*blasphemy*” only, but which in reality is the scientific discussion only of topics, in which humanity at large is deeply, intensely interested, and about which it has a full natural right to be informed and disabused--the educating of Indian tribes so as to become proselytes of the Roman Church and in consequence Roman voting citizens.

An invasión and conquest of Canada pretendedly in the interest of freedom but really for the purpose of increasing the Roman Catholic voting power would under the rule of a Roman Catholic majority of voters and of their elected representatives with the *obedience of all* to the Roman Pontifex be within probability.

Were the sovereign people of the United States, electing the instruments of both the legislative and executive power, to become a people of Roman Catholics, all our institutions would soon be shaped in accordance with the spirit of the Roman Church. And what has this spirit proven to be?

The recent declaration of the dogma of the infallibility of the Roman Pontifex when speaking *ex cathedra* (officially) creates the appearance of a tendency toward absolutism. At all events all power in the government of the church has been taken away from the people at large, and its hands, although they are expected to be open at all times for largely con-

tributing to the needs of the Church and of the clergy, are thoroughly manacled by the church law, that all property intended for religious or parish purposes cannot be held by the single communities themselves, but must be transferred to the hierarchical organization, before any priest of the Church may there officiate. Laymen have no longer the power of electing the priest officiating to their religious requirements, the election of teachers in their schools is under the dictation and approval of priesthood, and preference is given to men and women, the intellect of whom has been warped to the effect, that they believe exclusion from contact with the world will befit them better for preparing our children for their travel on the high road of busy life, and whose vow of celibacy and exclusion from legitimate intercourse with the other sex constitutes them as a permanent danger to public morals.

Therefore there can be no reasonable doubt, but that any legislative assembly with a majority of Catholic members, obeying to the commands of the Roman Church, as given by her acknowledged infallible representative, the Roman pope,—would destroy the institution of non-sectarian public schools, would spend the public moneys for the support of Roman Catholic schools, would be prevented in their consciences from appropriating



moneys to the use of schools of heretics.

And the Catholic executive power of the United States would be in conscience held to propagate the influence and power of the Roman Church in our political institutions by absorbing preferably catholic Canada, Mexico and Cuba, to aid in the re-establishment of the temporal power of the Roman pontifex, though such action might involve the United States in war, with half of the European powers. All *At Majorem Dei Gloriam*, though our freedom of conscience and our equality before the law and in the exercise of our political rights should be destroyed, and unless a new, more bitter, more bloody war for freedom of conscience be fought once more, than the history of the human race has seen before.



## SEVENTH LETTER.

WHAT CREED THE AMERICAN CITIZEN  
SHOULD SELECT.

*Your Eminence :*

That coming generations should also enjoy the boon and glory of the free institutions of this great republic, to the shores of which millions have fled from oppression, hoping to find freedom of conscience and individual liberty in matters of conviction and belief, this all depends on the Roman Catholic Church never obtaining a majority of votes in the Republic.

With the acquirements in knowledge and science at the present time we stand in a position, where, if we desire to select and accept any creed by our free volition and inclination and without compulsion and with the full knowledge, that true religiosity be monopolized by no creed on the one hand and be conditional to none on the other, it is proper, that in such selection, we should as citizens of this nation, consider besides the probable result of such selection on the welfare of ourselves individually, the result also, as far as the nation at large be concerned.

In the preceding letter I have shown the probable result of a majority of voters of the

United States of North America becoming Roman Catholics. But personal, individual reasons point in the same direction concerning the selection of the community we should join if any..

It cannot be contributive to happiness to belong to a church, which will refuse to bury the children at the side of their parents, unless to the last of their breathing they have confessed to the creed and to the practices of the Church, have loved not what the Church hates, a church, which carries into modern times all the barbarian instincts of intolerance, as they have marked its history from the very time, it ceased to be itself oppressed and to strive for liberty of conscience, and when it developed into a power and an oppressor itself.

If we select to join a religious community, it will be better to join one, where as little as possible of dogma, and as much as possible of mutual charity be preached, and to shun a community, where our children's brains will be stuffed from the first teachings they listen to, with horrible pictures of purgatory, and temporal tormentation in after life, which may be bought off with money on the part of those being left behind to be bestowed on the direct worldly benefit of its priesthood, and of eternal tormentation, as the result of not accepting all the teachings, as the Roman Church upholds them, and from time to time

expounds them, such as the dogma of Mary, both conceiving as a virgin being in turn conceived herself immaculately, that is in some different way from the manner, in which all other human beings are conceived, all the rest of humanity being assumed to be endowed from their very conception not only with all the discrepancies and weaknesses of human nature but besides with a kind of supernatural inheritance of a sin committed by Adam and Eve, when they, as the story is told by the author of the book "Genesis," ate the fruit from the tree of knowledge, which we are told was then already forbidden, as priestdom is apt to forbid it to-day, except when taken for the purpose of befitting to the acceptance of their teachings, and by which fruit, although Adam did not die the very day he ate it, as he had been specifically told, that he would die, *his eyes were opened*, and it certainly is our fault if at this late date we do not judge with opened eyes.

The sole fact, that it is a practice of the Roman Catholic church, to have the wives and daughters of Catholic citizens, enter the confessional of a man, though he be a clergyman, and there to have them lay open and have discussed the secrets of their hearts and bodies, should deter every true American man, bearing respect to the women of his race, from joining the Roman Catholic Church, not to speak of

the presumption as between man and man, that it requires the instrumentality of one, to bring about divine forgiveness for another. Americans as a rule are too proud and too busy to find time for confessing their sins into the ears of another man.

Your Eminence not having made good the assertion (p. 10) *concerning us, that Christianity*, in special in its Roman Catholic form, be *profitable for all things, having the promise of the life, that now is as well as of that, which is to come*, many (including the reverently undersigned) will respectfully decline being drawn into the folds of the Roman Church.

Very Respectfully

MICH. DE GAVARELLE.

All correspondence must be enveloped twice:

1st (inner) with the mark ☐

2d (outer) with direction to "Polytechnical News Company,"

New York (7 Pearl Street).

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# PROPAGANDA VERITATIS NATURALIS.

*Society for Propagating Natural Truth.*

## CONSTITUTION.

1. The Propaganda Veritatis Naturalis is intended to spread all over the earth and therefore named in a language used by all nations. She has associated for the purpose of propagating knowledge about natural things as a safeguard against superstition and against the false claims of teachers of supernatural theorems.

2. This purpose is to be promoted by seven methods namely:

a. Personal attendance to local meetings of members of both sexes of the association

b. The establishment and use of libraries under the control of the P. V. N. containing preferably such literature, by which the intents of the Propaganda V. N. will be fostered.

c. The establishment of abodes for Propagandists to meet in, their libraries to be kept in, and the people to be admitted in, to hear natural truth expounded.

d. The publication of a series of books and periodicals to show and explain the position assumed by the P. V. N. and to propagate such knowledge as will foster the tendencies of the Propaganda

e. The mutual promotion of the temporal welfare of and by all members of the Propaganda V. N. by giving to them at least legitimate preference under equal conditions in all cases involving the interest of members.

f. The maintenance of special voluntary associations with conditions equal to all and on an elective basis for securing work to the industrious, information to the intellect, care to the sick or poor, and honorable burial to the dead.

g. The support by members of the P. V. N. within their own political party of members of the P. V. N. in all nominations and elections for public offices.

3. The Propaganda V. N. is both national and international. Her organization is that of a people ruling itself by conferring in election its authority to its own temporary agents for legislative, judicial and executive purposes, her Constitution being similar to that of the United States with unimpeached autonomy of all parts and stages in her organization, the different orders having the sole object of training the members for the necessary functions within the organization.

4. The Propaganda Veritatis Naturalis is as a Tree and consists of Roots, one Trunk and Branches.

Her Roots are the National Associations, (National Chapters) each with Autonomy of Organization, parted one from another by their idioms, each including seven orders (1 to 7).

Her Trunk consists in the International Organization (International Chapter) of Legislators (Congress). Advisers (Senate) and the executive authority, the Great Grand Master.

Her Branches are the International Workers chosen from National Chapters, chosen by and acting under authority emanating from the Great Grand Master, Masters of National Chapters. They include orders 11 and 12 of the Missionary Chapter, one order of missionaries acting in their own chapter, and one order acting as envoys to other chapters.

5. The Propaganda Veritatis Naturalis has members, who enter as such of the first order, and may, by virtue of holding an elective office in the order or by election amongst their equals, or by appointment through either the National or International Executive Power be advanced from order to order.

6. The twelve orders of the Propaganda Veritatis Naturalis are:

- |                       |   |     |   |
|-----------------------|---|-----|---|
| National Chapters     | { | 1.  | Order of <i>Readers</i> .   |
|                       |   | 2.  | " <i>Thinkers</i> .   |
|                       |   | 3.  | " <i>Speakers</i> . (Local Expounders)  |
|                       |   | 4.  | " <i>Lecturers</i> .  |
|                       |   | 5.  | " <i>Writers</i> (Local Officers).  |
|                       |   | 6.  | " <i>Workers</i> (National Officers) or   |
|                       |   | 7.  | " <i>Founders</i> (Apostles).<br>Grand Master of National Chapter.  |
| International Chapter | { | 8.  | " <i>Legislators</i> (Congress) Ex  |
|                       |   | 9.  | " <i>Grand Masters</i> of National Chapters.  |
|                       |   | 10. | " <i>Advisers</i> (Ex-Great Grand Masters). (Senate).<br>Great Grand Master, by whom all Charters to Chapters or Parishes are executed. |

- |                       |   |   |
|-----------------------|---|---|
| Missionary<br>Chapter | { | 11. Order of Permanent Commissioners representing the International Great Grand Master in each national Chapter (Ex-Great Grand Masters and Ex-Grand Masters) |
|                       | { | 12. “      Envoys extraordinary from the International Great Grand Master to National Chapters.   |

7. The Propaganda uses (international) signs of recognition each order adding one to those of the lower orders.

8. Only at official gatherings of the Propaganda V. N. members are under obligation to respond to calls for recognition.

Willingness to respond to all calls for recognition by members of the Propaganda V. N., is expressed by the wearing of the Propaganda V. N.'s Emblem.

10. Readership (First Order) is acquired by the purchase of six of its serial publications, evidenced by the return of blanks taken from the copies purchased, and involves no obligations but entitles to admission to the second order (of thinkers) without other formalities than the registration in the secret lists of the Propaganda V. N. as members of the second orders

11. Applicants to the second order are entitled to be informed of the By-Laws of the Propaganda before entering the same and of the signs and emblems of their order and of the symbols, with which the officers of their order sign.

12. The mark: “Published by order of the Society for Propagating Natural Truth”, or other words of the same or similar meaning can be attached to any book or periodical only under a written authority from the “Secretary for Publications of the *Society for Propagating Natural Truth*.” And this authority is given only under a special order from the National Grand Master, who shall previously hear the workers, and such order is not made, unless the book or periodical be printed on the P. V. N.'s own presses or be issued under contract, by which the P. V. N. receives a share in the proceeds towards her administrative expenses. The Propaganda V. N. does not assume by such mark responsibility for all contents but signifies the approval of the general tendency of the publication only.

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The Secretary for Publications of the  
Society for Propagating Natural Truth.







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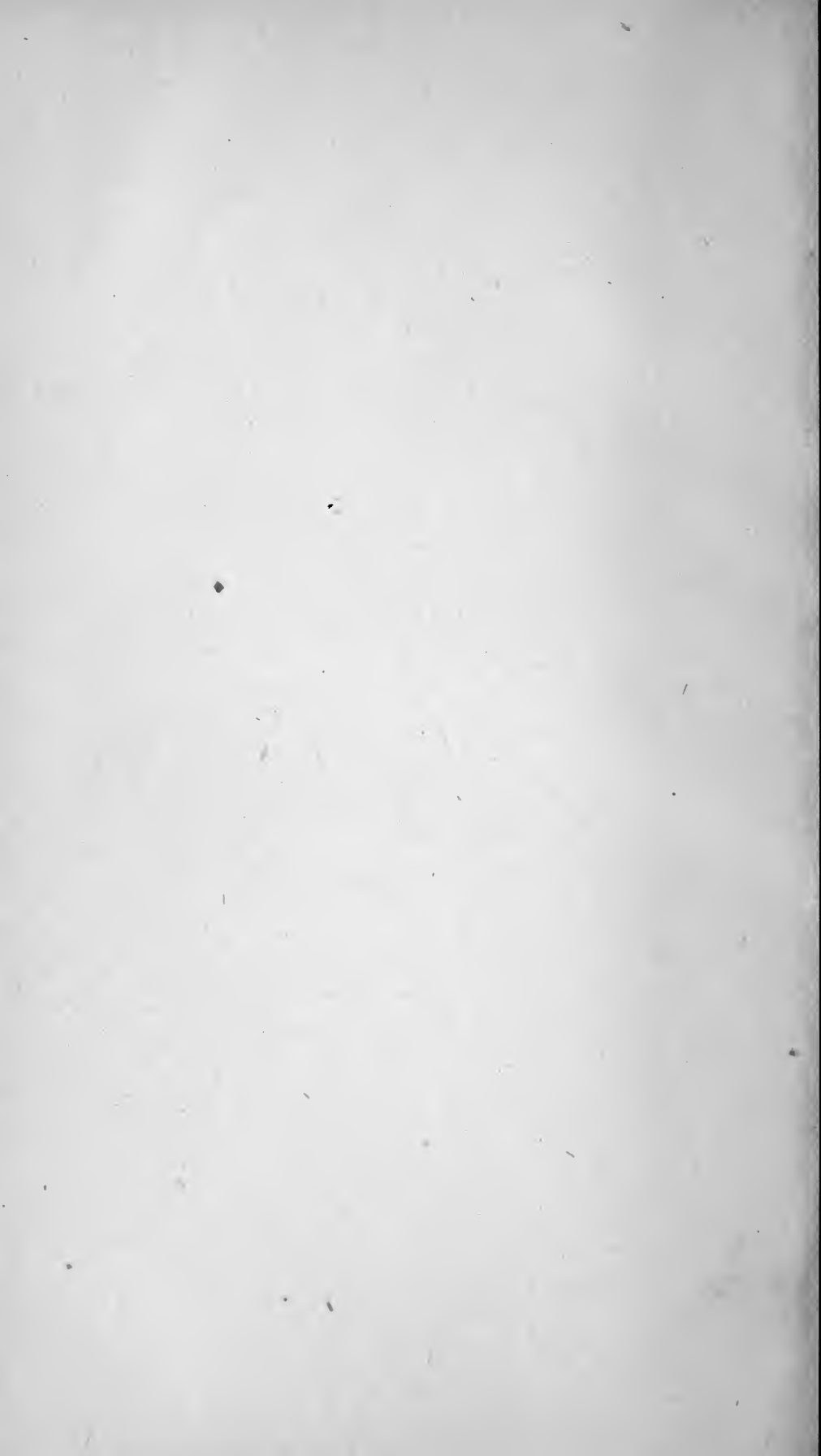
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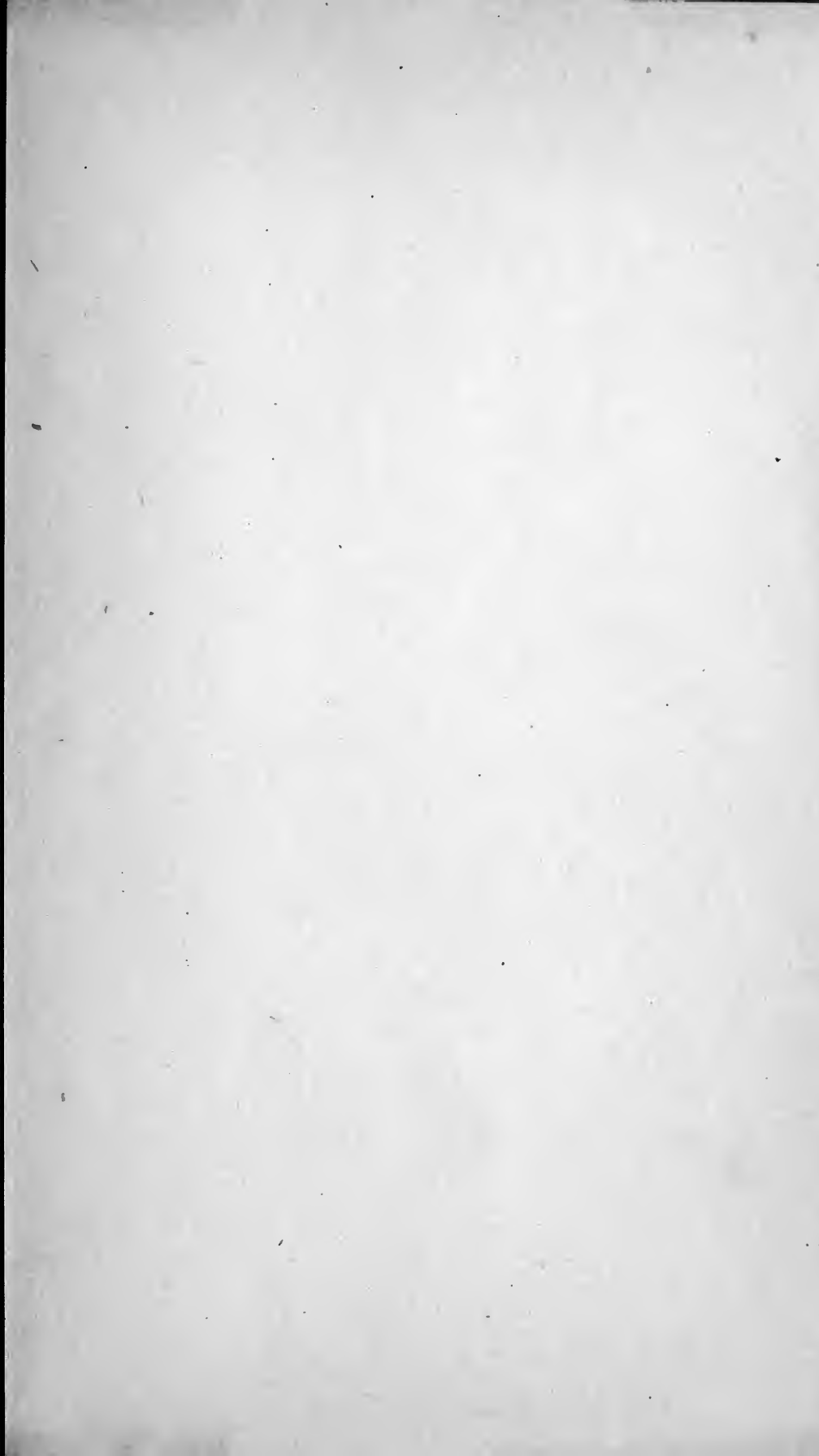


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